

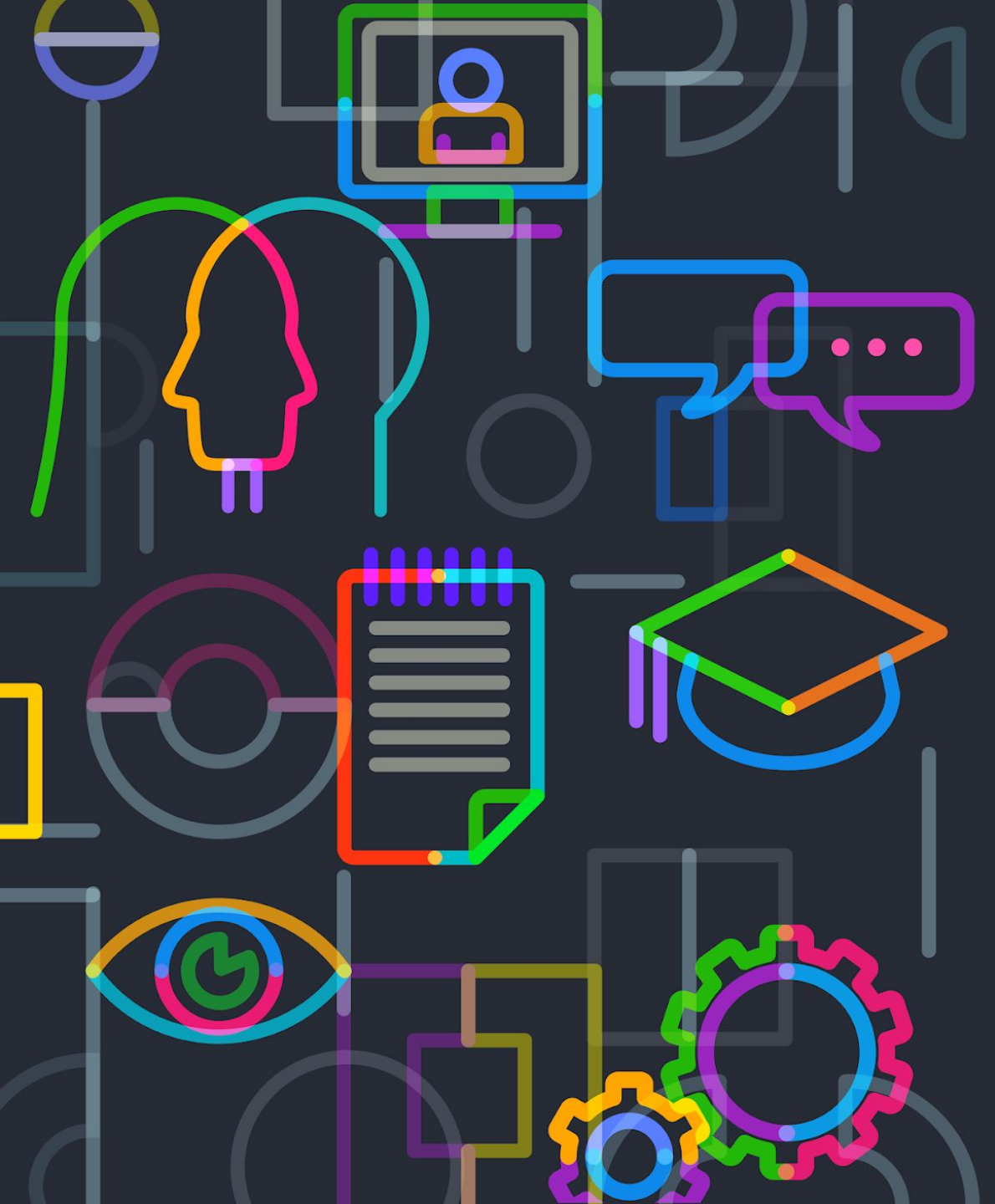


# Nebraska's Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Dr. Shirley Vargas & Lane Carr

# Objectives

- Discuss key differences between continuous improvement and school improvement
- Dive into a comprehensive needs assessment, and discuss its potential implications
- Identify ways to bridge findings into action
- Answer any questions

**Mission:**

To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.

**Goal:**

Ensure all Nebraskans, regardless of background or circumstances, have equitable access to opportunities for success.

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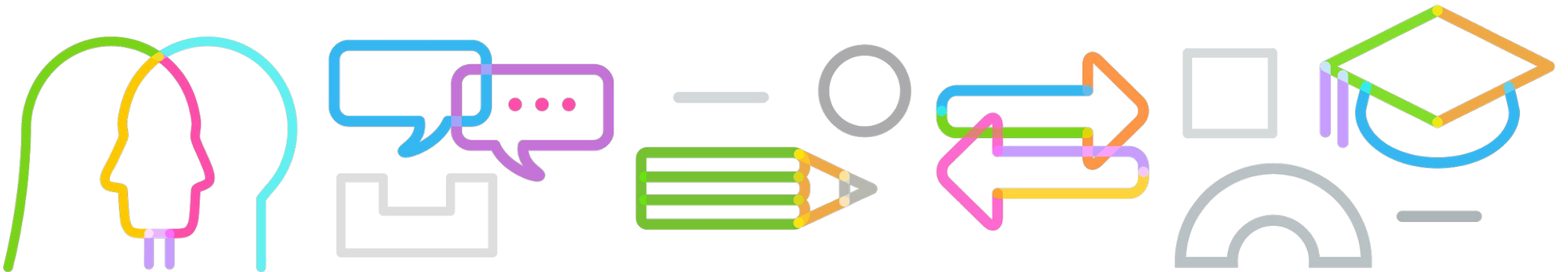
Increase the number of Nebraskans who are ready for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

**Goal:**

Ensure the education system, including the Nebraska Department of Education, are taking charge of their roles and responsibilities to provide leadership and enhance school support systems in the state.

# Educational Equity

Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity to not only reach high expectations for learning, but also to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests, careers, and civic lives.





# School Improvement Core Beliefs

## **We believe:**

- ...in the value of work already taking place in schools.
- ...all schools can improve.
- ...it's not our students' fault.
- ...school improvement is fundamentally about equity.

# School Improvement and Continuous Improvement

## **Continuous Improvement**

Any school or instructional-improvement process that unfolds progressively, that does not have a fixed or predetermined end point, and that is sustained over extended periods of time. The concept also encompasses the general belief that improvement is not something that starts and stops, but it's something that requires an organizational or professional commitment to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection, adaptation, and growth.

<http://edglossary.org/continuous-improvement/>

## **School Improvement**

Dramatic and comprehensive intervention in low-performing schools. Involves turnaround leadership, culture shift, instructional transformation, and talent development.

[https://centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CST\\_Four-Domains-Framework-Final.pdf](https://centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CST_Four-Domains-Framework-Final.pdf)

# Continuous vs. School Improvement

Headache

**= Symptom/signal for improvement (ex. test scores)**

Doctor

**= Needs assessment/Root cause analysis**

High blood pressure

**= Diagnosis / identification of areas of focus**

Eating Healthy, Brushing your Teeth, Exercising

**= Continuous improvement**

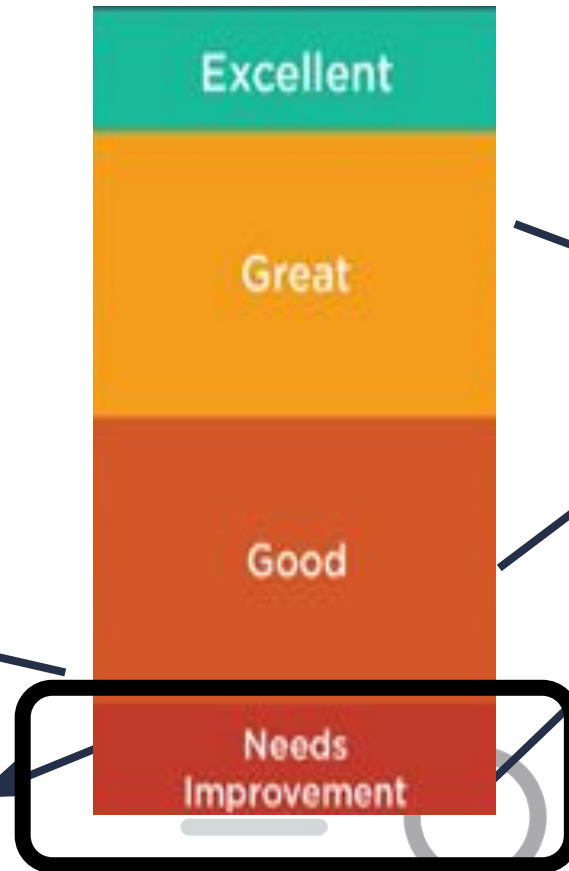
# Who should use the comprehensive needs assessment?

## Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)

- Lowest 5% of Title I schools
- High schools with grad rates below 67%
- Consistently low-performing student group

## Priority Schools

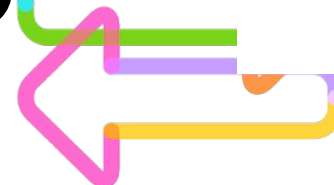
Among the lowest performing schools AND demonstrate the greatest need to implement and sustain school improvement efforts



## Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)

- Consistently low-performing student group

\*Beginning in 2019, any school with consistently low-performing subgroup may not be classified as Excellent





# Continuum of Supports





# A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO THE AQuESTT SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

www.aquestt.com

www.education.ne.gov/essa

nep.education.ne.gov



## CHAMPIONS FOR EQUITY

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is committed to leading and supporting the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living. Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity. The NDE recognizes school success does not look the same everywhere. To be champions of equity, schools, Educational Service Units (ESUs), parents, community members, and the NDE must define success together for all students.

## AQuESTT

The NDE and stakeholders across the state created an accountability and support system, AQuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow), which centers around six tenets. With ESSA guidance, schools can focus more on providing supports to their students, instead of being labeled or punished.

In the past, the federal education law, *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), created a high-stakes, punitive environment for schools. In 2015, NCLB was replaced with the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which allows states to focus on supports for schools to help them better serve their students. The AQuESTT system allows schools to focus more on educational equity for their students, and puts renewed emphasis on school improvement.

With ESSA guidance, schools can focus more on providing supports to students instead of being labeled or punished. AQuESTT serves as a comprehensive tool to classify schools, and more importantly identify schools needing support to achieve more educational equity in all six tenets for our students.

## A FOCUS ON STUDENT GROUP PERFORMANCE

School improvement conversations must start with students at the center. This means considering the differing needs of each student, and identifying themes or trends among student groups. Beginning in 2019, NDE will strengthen their support to schools with lower performing student groups. Schools will be designated for Targeted Support and Improvement, a cohort of schools that will intentionally focus on the more intensive strategies to reach student groups. This support exemplifies the NDE's focus on equity and will build off a school's assets, while ensuring learners and their needs are at the center.

To personalize supports for students, schools must look critically at their data, breaking it down by student characteristics such as race and ethnicity, English proficiency status, disability, and socioeconomic status. This analysis informs the evidence-based intervention strategies needed to ensure the narrowing of academic achievement gaps between student groups.

## PARTNERSHIPS

The work of providing equitable opportunities is not just the work of the NDE, ESUs, and schools receiving support. Because the focus is on all students, all schools must strive to continuously improve, regardless of the level of support they might be receiving, because of the challenges and rigor our current educational system demands. AQuESTT is the system which asks all schools, parents, and community members, in partnerships with the NDE and ESUs, to get serious about the success of all students and serve in roles like never before.

## THE SYSTEM IN ACTION

AQuESTT allows schools to focus more on educational equity for their students. The NDE, through the AQuESTT system, classifies schools into four categories: Excellent, Great, Good, and Needs Improvement. These classifications are based on a number of student and school indicators. (For more information see Indicators). This classification will now occur annually.

For the 2018-19 school year, the metrics to be used for classification are seen in the table below:

ESSA Indicator Categories	Academic Achievement	Academic Progress	English Language Proficiency and Progress	Graduation Rate	School Quality or Student Success
AQuESTT Indicators	Status	Growth, Improvement, Non-Proficiency	Progress Towards English Language Proficiency	4- and 7-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	Chronic Absenteeism, Science, Evidence-based Analysis

The next and newest step in the continuation of the AQuESTT system allows the NDE to use those classifications to funnel resources and supports to students, with the ultimate goal of ensuring all students across all backgrounds and circumstances, have equitable access and opportunities for success. These different levels of support are as follows:

## LEVELS OF SUPPORT

			Support	Timeline
All Schools			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tools and a continuous improvement framework (AQuESTT, EBA)</li><li>Access to data to support continuous improvement planning process</li></ul>	Continuous
Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)	Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI)		Support	Timeline
A public school with one or more consistently underperforming student groups (2019, annually thereafter)	Any public school with one or more student group(s) performing at or below the performance level of students in state's lowest-performing public schools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Comprehensive needs assessment</li><li>Plan for improvement tailored to meet needs of student groups connected to continuous improvement plan</li></ul>	2019; Annually subsequently
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)			Support	Timeline
Lowest 5 percent of Title 1 Schools <b>OR</b>	Any public high schools with graduation rate below 67%, <b>OR</b>	Public schools with consistently under-performing student groups for 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Comprehensive needs assessment</li><li>Plan for improvement connected to continuous improvement plan</li><li>Eligible for funding to support implementation of plan for improvement</li></ul>	Winter 2018; Every three years subsequently
Priority Schools			Support	Timeline
Public schools coming from Needs Improvement category <b>AND</b>	Multiple data sources indicating prioritization of need		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Intervention team appointed to aid in improvement efforts</li><li>Intensive approach for improvement</li><li>NDE-facilitated support with ESU partners</li></ul>	Continuous; At discretion of State Board of Education

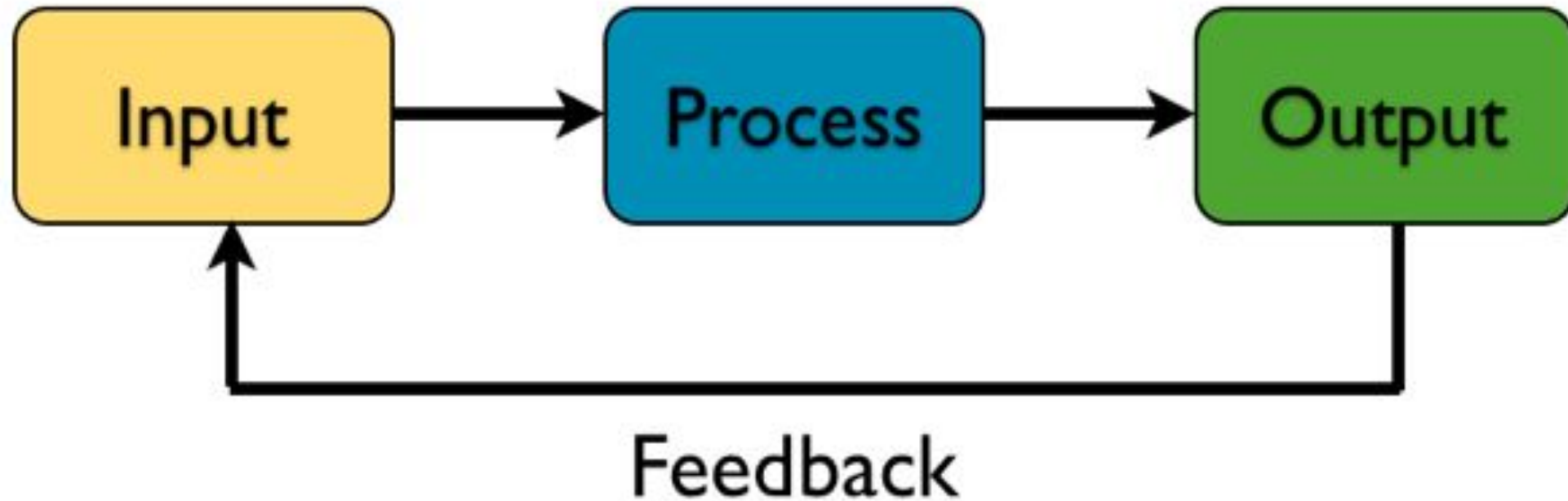
<https://bit.ly/2Z6Peef>

# Development of Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- Developed in response to need for use of comprehensive support and improvement (CSI)
- In partnership with Regional Education Laboratory and ESUs
- Significant user feedback and expert review
- Collaborative, year-long effort
- Oriented around six tenets of AQuESTT
- Screener for pinpointing areas of greatest needs
- Dynamic “results” page helps determine areas of emphasis

# Why use the comprehensive needs assessment?

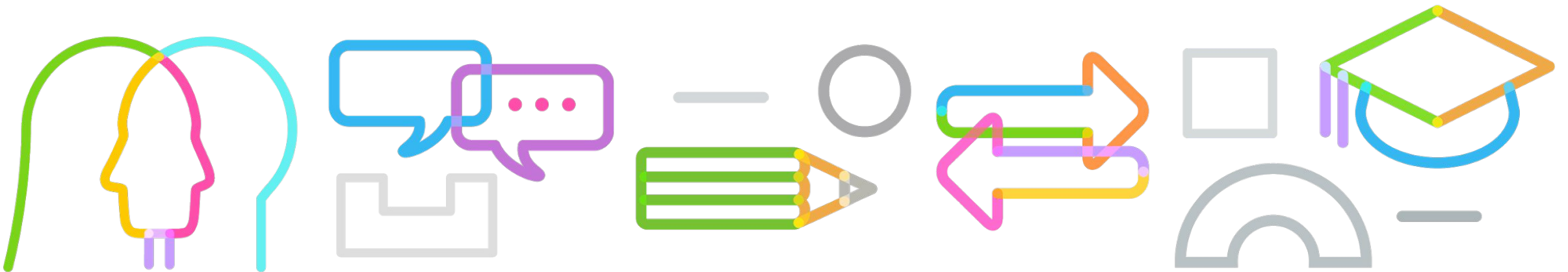
- Helps answer “why” we ended up with the outputs we did
- Illuminates and narrows areas of focus
- Identifies potential connection points between inputs and outcomes





# Considerations when Using

- Helps diagnose where a school is in a **moment in time**
- Not meant to be continuously used (**school improvement tool**)
- Must be **paired with other data** - both quantitative and qualitative





## Overview of the NDE Comprehensive Needs Assessment

This document includes an OVERVIEW tab, ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS tab, SCREENER tab (optional), (SELECT TENETS tab (optional), RUBRIC tab, RESULTS tab, and GLOSSARY tab.

### [1. Introduction](#)

### [2. What is the purpose of the CNA?](#)

### [3. How can schools use the CAN? How long will it take?](#)

### [4. How is the CNA organized?](#)

*\*Click a topic above to automatically jump to that information.*

Upon opening the

Excel file, if prompted, click any of the following:

- ✓ "Enable editing"
- ✓ "Enable content"
- ✓ "Enable macros"

These must be enabled for

## 1. Introduction

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) developed the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) based on quality education practices for student success. Because the tool aligns to AQuESTT, it articulates the expected educational practices under each of the six tenets and the areas of focus supporting each tenet. When implemented fully, these educational practices are intended to help schools achieve the following AQuESTT long-term outcomes:

**Positive Partnerships, Relationships, and Success:** Students have enhanced and sustained educational experiences and opportunities as a result of positive student, family, and community engagement.

**Transitions:** Students have quality educational opportunities that promote successful transitions between grade levels, programs, schools, postsecondary institutions, and careers.

**Education opportunities and Access:** All students have access to equitable and comprehensive instructional opportunities that prepare them for postsecondary education and careers.

**College, Career, and Civic Ready:** Every student upon completion of secondary education is prepared for postsecondary education, career, and civic opportunities.



Overview

Administration Instructions

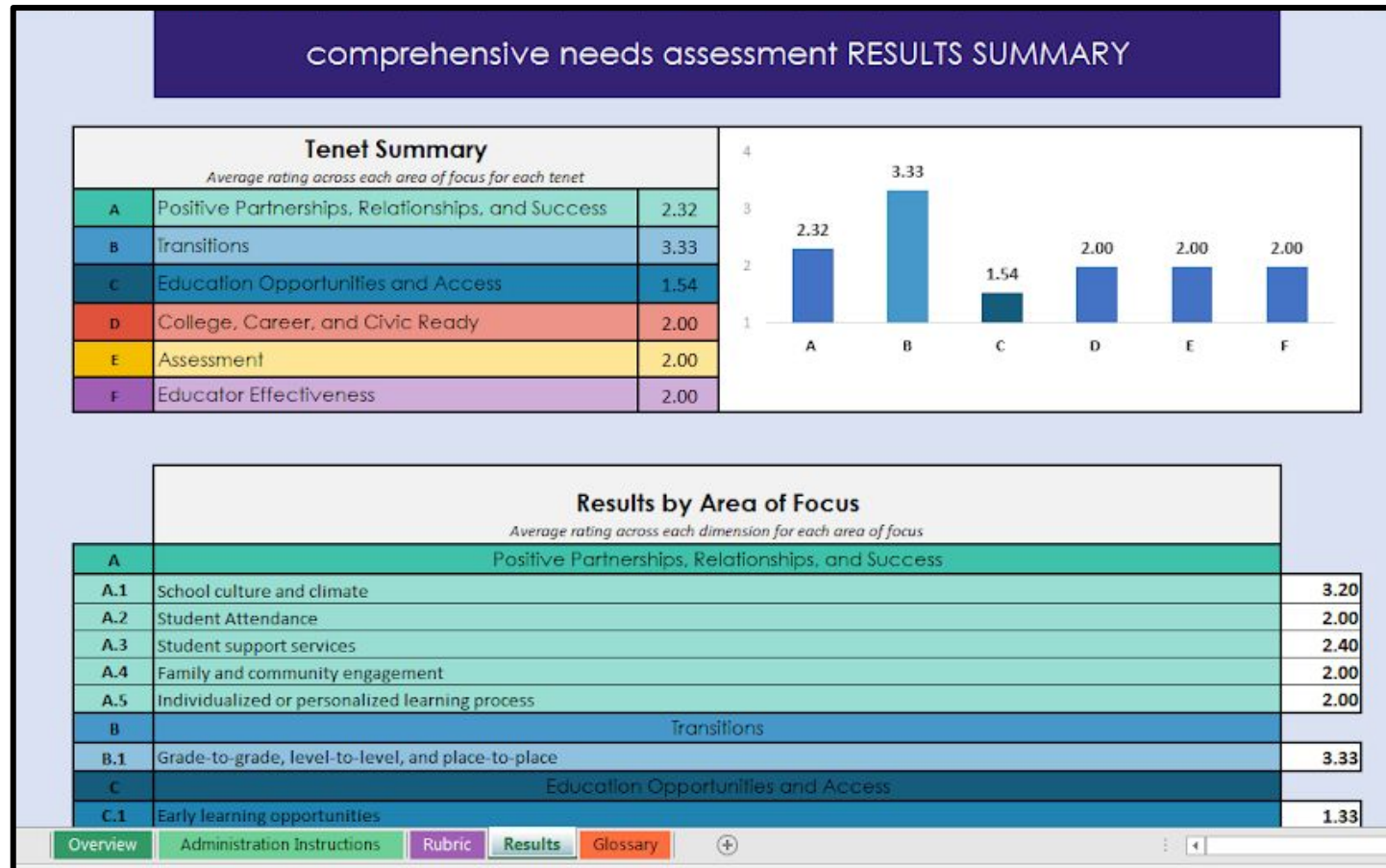
Rubric

Results

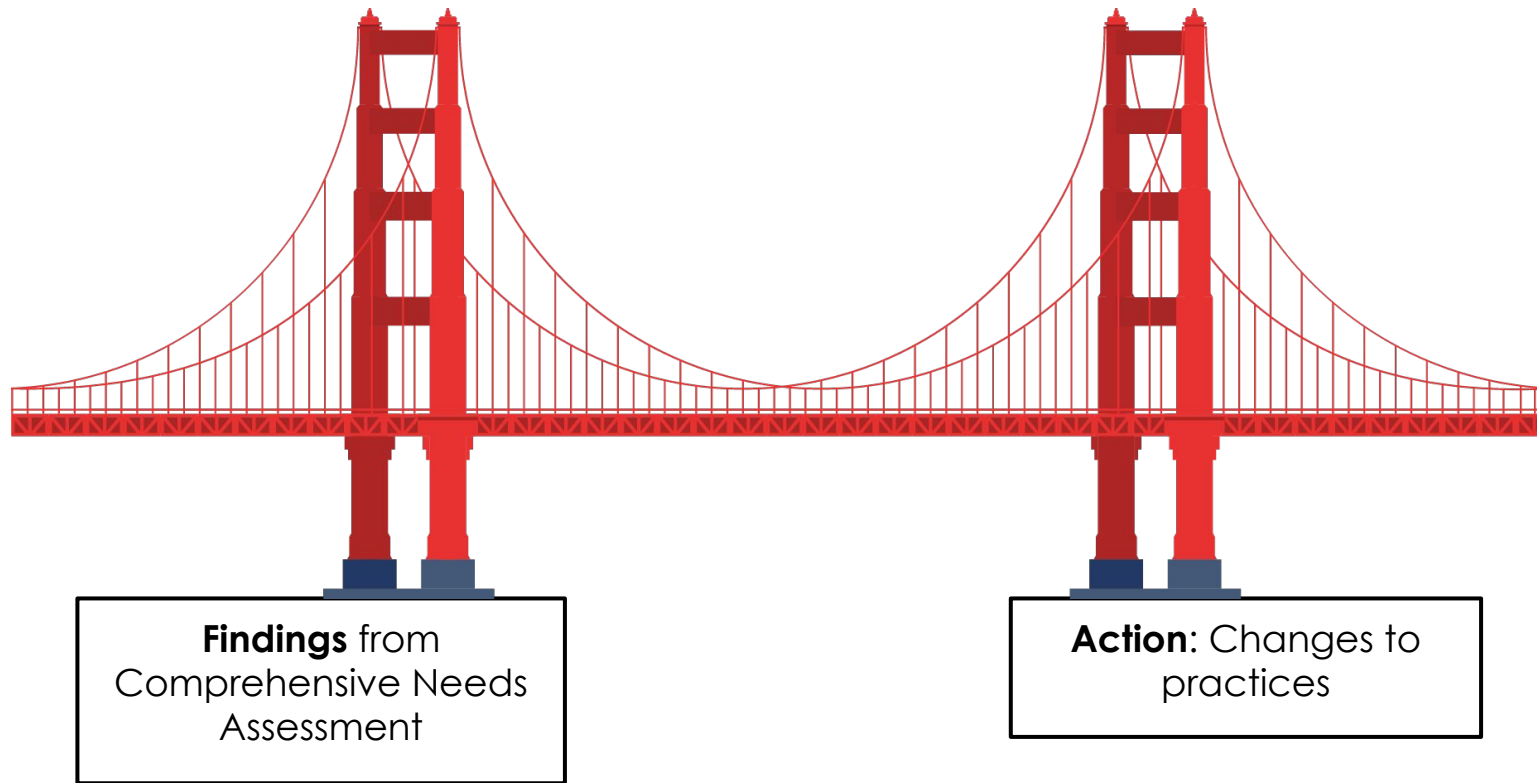
Glossary



# Using the Results



# Connecting Findings to Action



*Comprehensive Needs Assessment - Connecting Findings to Action  
NDE Administrator Day 07/31/2019*

## **You have the data, now what?**

- Review your current continuous improvement plan. What is/are your current continuous improvement goal(s)?
- With your continuous improvement team, discuss the following questions:
  - Are your results from the needs assessment confirming or refuting your initial plans?
  - Why is there misalignment between the continuous improvement plan and what was exposed by the needs assessment?
  - What other data (qualitative and quantitative) supports your findings?
  - What are the root causes of findings from comprehensive needs assessment?
    - Ex. Why did our school score the lowest in the "Educational Opportunities and Access" tenet?
  - What types of support will you need to address the areas exposed in the needs assessment?
  - What should you continue doing, stop doing, and start doing?
- Refine your continuous improvement plan

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/17d7EbMpS\\_Qtw1sDLxkdZnqEsaLlLrFJb\\_XdpNJoEpbQ/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17d7EbMpS_Qtw1sDLxkdZnqEsaLlLrFJb_XdpNJoEpbQ/edit?usp=sharing)





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